Intervention: Efforts to encourage oral health screening by other health care providers

Finding: Insufficient evidence to determine effectiveness

Potential partners to undertake the intervention:

☒Nonprofits or local coalitions
☒Schools or universities
☒Health care providers
☒State public health departments
☒Hospitals, clinics or managed care organizations

☒Businesses or labor organizations
☐Media
☒Local public health departments
☐Policymakers
☐Other:

Background on the intervention:

Most children see a physician numerous times before their first visit to an oral health care provider. Thus, incorporating oral health screening into early physical examinations is often recommended as a means of identifying high-risk children, educating parents, and ensuring appropriate oral care.

Findings from the systematic reviews:

There was insufficient evidence to determine effectiveness for this intervention. Practices that lack sufficient research to support effectiveness should not be confused with ineffective programs. Rather, they should be recognized as programs that have the potential to become evidence based practices—if properly evaluated. Practitioners are encouraged to monitor the impact of these programs in their communities and report on their findings in order to build a base of knowledge sufficient to reach consensus.

Additional information:

National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center - www.mchoralhealth.org/HeadStart/headstart.html

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry issued Clinical Guidelines on Infant Oral Health Care. Although these guidelines are intended primarily for oral health practitioners, they recognize the potential benefits of physician involvement in oral health care. These guidelines are available online at: http://www.aapd.org/media/policies.asp.

References:

Formicola AJ, Ro M, Marshall S, Derksen D, et al. Strengthening the oral health safety net: delivery models that improve access to oral health care for uninsured and underserved populations. American Journal of Public Health, 2004 May; 94(5):702.